

# Bristol's local food *update*

COURSES • SKILL-SHARING • EVENTS • NEWS • VOLUNTEERING

SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 2009



September is food festival month! The Organic Festival returns to Bristol's harbourside, and the 'Taste' local food festival brings a host of foodie events to the north Bristol fringe. But don't forget the smaller events. Across the city, local groups will be celebrating the local harvest. Why not join them?

Please email any suggestions for content of the November–December newsletter to [bristollocalfood@googlemail.com](mailto:bristollocalfood@googlemail.com) by 13 October.

## Freeskilling

**The Better Food Company**  
Proving House, Servier Street,  
St Werburghs, Bristol  
[www.betterfood.co.uk](http://www.betterfood.co.uk)

### 7pm Tuesday 15 September How to make Mead and Wine

Local bee-keeper Allen Coates will talk us through general wine-making principles, with an emphasis on making delicious, honey-based wines incorporating local fruits and spices.

### 7pm Tuesday 6 October Permaculture – An Introduction

Join Sarah Pugh for an introduction to Permaculture.

### 7pm Tuesday 20 October Dowsing

Discover what dowsing is and how you can use it in practice. With Alison Wilding.

For more information on your local Freeconomy Community  
[www.justfortheLoveofit.org](http://www.justfortheLoveofit.org)

The evenings are absolutely FREE and EVERYONE is welcome, though donations are accepted for the venue.



## Food Standards Agency's Organic Review

**The Food Standards Agency (FSA)'s review of the benefits of organic food received widespread press coverage when they concluded that there were no significant nutritional differences between organic and non organic food.**

The FSA report was based on a review of existing academic studies, and it selectively chose which studies to include. The Soil Association claim that this ruled out a considerable number of papers, which then led the FSA to conclude that "the increased levels of nutrients found in organic food were not significant because of the consequently small number of studies".

The Soil Association also say that the researchers failed to include the results of a major EU-funded study (QLIF). Results from this study include the findings that: *'Levels of a range of nutritionally desirable compounds (e.g. antioxidants, vitamins, glycosinolates) were shown to be higher in organic crops'* and *'Levels of nutritionally undesirable compounds (e.g. mycotoxins, glycoalkaloids, Cadmium and Nickel) were shown to be lower in organic crops'.*

The FSA report also ignored all of the other benefits of organic farming – that organic food is not covered in pesticides, that organically-raised livestock is not routinely

given antibiotics, and is reared to high animal welfare standards, or that organic farms encourage wildlife.

So did the FSA just pick the papers they wanted, to give them the conclusions they were looking for? For some alternative views on the FSA's conclusions...

[www.soilassociation.org/Whyorganic/Health/tabid/59/Default.aspx](http://www.soilassociation.org/Whyorganic/Health/tabid/59/Default.aspx)

[www.betterfood.co.uk/bulletin.html](http://www.betterfood.co.uk/bulletin.html)

<http://zone5.org/2009/08/05/the-real-dirt-on-organic-food/>

[www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-1203343/JOANNA-BLYTHMAN-A-cancerous-conspiracy-poison-faith-organic-food.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-1203343/JOANNA-BLYTHMAN-A-cancerous-conspiracy-poison-faith-organic-food.html)

[www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-0812-peaches-pesticides-mainaug12,0,3775004.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-0812-peaches-pesticides-mainaug12,0,3775004.story)

[www.grist.org/article/2009-08-11-obvious-advantage-organic-food-conventional/](http://www.grist.org/article/2009-08-11-obvious-advantage-organic-food-conventional/)

[www.grist.org/article/2009-08-13-debate-soil-organics-nutrition/](http://www.grist.org/article/2009-08-13-debate-soil-organics-nutrition/)

[www.alternet.org/healthwellness/142145/desperate\\_food\\_industry\\_tries\\_to\\_tar\\_michael\\_pollan\\_and\\_organic\\_produce/](http://www.alternet.org/healthwellness/142145/desperate_food_industry_tries_to_tar_michael_pollan_and_organic_produce/)

# Courses...

...with Eastside Roots

Trinity Arts Centre  
[www.eastsideroots.org.uk](http://www.eastsideroots.org.uk)  
[www.3ca.org.uk/projects/trinity-gardens](http://www.3ca.org.uk/projects/trinity-gardens)



## Autumn organic food growing

**10am–12.30pm Thursdays**  
**17 September–5 November**  
£50 (waged) or £25 (unwaged)

This short course will focus on seasonal tasks and skills. We will learn the tools and tricks to ensure you can eat from your garden throughout the autumn and winter and get set ready for the next season.

We will cover...

- Making raised beds
- Growing vegetables over winter
- Winter salads
- Green manures
- Fruit bush and tree pruning
- More plants for free – taking cuttings
- Seedsaving

The sessions will be a mix of ideas and information indoors, followed by hands-on work in the thriving community garden.

To join or find out more, call Tom on 07988 460373, or email [t\\_daly@hotmail.com](mailto:t_daly@hotmail.com).

...at Ragmans Lane Farm

Lower Lydbrook, Gloucestershire  
[www.ragmans.co.uk](http://www.ragmans.co.uk)

## Permaculture for Groups

**13 September–3 October**  
£550, bursaries available for low/unwaged

A two-week Permaculture Design Course for individuals working within a group to bring about change. We will concentrate on the skills needed to bring about successful and durable achievements in a group situation. After this course you will have a good grasp of permaculture principles and be able to help create an 'holistic' goal to clarify and celebrate a common purpose using facilitation skills, open space and conflict resolution.

...at the University of Bristol  
Botanic Gardens

Hollybush Lane, Stoke Bishop, Bristol  
For all course information:  
[www.bristol.ac.uk/Depts/BotanicGardens/about/education.htm](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/Depts/BotanicGardens/about/education.htm)

## A day of herbs in the garden

**10am–4pm Saturday 5 September**  
Tutor: Ann Freeman · Course fee: £45

An exploration of the use and history of medicinal plants using plants from the European Herb Garden and glasshouses. The study day will be a mixture of presentations and practical demonstrations, focusing on the herb collection's late summer early autumn fruit and flower. Course for beginners.

## Surveying and enriching your garden for wildlife

**7–9pm Tuesday evenings**  
**13 October–17 November**  
Tutor: Emma Smith · Course fee: £65

Even the smallest urban garden can provide a vital refuge for wildlife. This course will cover basic surveying techniques needed to produce an inventory of wildlife in your garden, practical measures that can be taken to improve the diversity and richness of habitats your garden can offer, as well as showing you wildlife friendly ways to manage your garden.

## RHS (Level 2) Certificate in Horticulture

**9.30am–2.45pm, Wednesdays**  
**23 September 2009–June 2010**  
£425

This popular theory-based course covers all aspects of horticulture including propagation, pest and disease recognition, plant biology, garden layout and design, ornamental horticulture, fruit and vegetable growing, soil science and general horticultural practice. The course requires no prior knowledge and is suitable for amateur gardeners as well as those beginning a career in horticulture. There is an opportunity to take the RHS (level 2) Certificate examination in June 2010. Enrolments now taking place.

...at Windmill Hill City Farm  
Philip Street, Bedminster  
[www.windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk](http://www.windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk)

## Permaculture

**9.30am–12.30pm Tuesdays**  
**10 sessions starting 29 September**  
£110

Interested in sustainable living and self-sufficiency, but living in the city or suburbs? This course is an introduction to permaculture and how it can be applied in your life and to your garden, even if you don't have one!

## Grow Your Own

**9.30am–12.30pm Thursdays**  
**starting 1 October**  
£74.00

A course to provide you with the know how to grow your own organic food effectively in your garden or allotment plot.

...at the Create Centre

B-Bond warehouse, Smeaton Road  
[www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset\\_id=31106010&](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=31106010&)

## Introduction to Permaculture

**6.30–8.30pm Tuesdays (6–8pm 22 Sept)**  
**8 sessions from 15 September**  
Tutor: Ruth O'Brien · £80/£40

From the ethics and philosophy to the nature-inspired principles, with real examples of Permaculture in practice, this course aims to give you a good basic understanding of what Permaculture is, and explore how you can start to put it into action. Course includes visits, practical work, nature walks, group activities, talks and slideshows, plus two Saturday mornings for visits/practical and design work on 3 October and 7 November.

## Organic Gardening

**6.30–8.30pm Tuesdays**  
**10 sessions from 15 September**  
Tutor: Tim Foster · £80/£40

Learn how to grow your own food in a small space without the use of artificial chemicals. The best techniques are covered for the organic cultivation of the main vegetable groups and fruit.

# More tales from the Blue Finger

Richard Spalding



Reflecting on derelict smallholdings from the comfort of the sofa!



The beginnings of Blue Finger revitalisation?

**The last few weeks has seen the appearance of a number of boards along the blue finger of grade 1 agricultural land next to the M32 on the north Bristol fringe.**

They are encouraging growers to think about renting parcels of land to grow food or graze animals on short-term leases. This does seem to be a really encouraging development for which Bristol City Council should be applauded. However, it needs to be tempered by a healthy scepticism which asks deeper questions about the long term future of this priceless land resource.

Potential business plans being drawn up for food growing enterprises need longer leases to encourage strategic use of the land in order that viable food enterprises can emerge.

Planners from both the Bristol and South Gloucestershire bits of the Blue Finger\* need to be encouraged to have a dialogue which looks towards enabling growers to be provided with real incentives to use this fantastic soil resource for a more localised food economy.

I want to encourage ALL food initiatives (new, fledgling and established) along this strip of land to join together to celebrate 'Blue Finger Food' as a mark of quality and authenticity as north Bristol's kite mark of distinctive local produce.

The recently published *Food Matters One Year On* from HM Government makes all kinds of noises about local food security whilst remaining largely silent on the whole issue of soil and land as a key

contributor to delivering more local food provisioning. We used to have a legal framework protecting the top grades of agricultural land under something called "Best and Most Versatile" land. This protection no longer exists as we appear to have de-valued its ability to contribute to feeding us as the global food economy kicked in.

The current offers of land for short term use is to be welcomed, but the whole issue of strategic planning for food in locations like the north Bristol fringe demands a city-region approach in order that we can assess the contribution the highest quality soils might make to feeding our cities and towns into an uncertain future.

The former market garden landscapes of the blue finger could be re-vitalised through the development of smarter ways of re-designing food into our daily lives. This must surely come through a range of business models involving commercial AND community food initiatives.

If you want to contribute to this debate, then please contact me at: [richardspalding@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:richardspalding@blueyonder.co.uk)

*\*The phrase 'blue finger' comes from my own continuing exploration of the 1953 Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales, Sheet 156, which identifies a strip the highest grade land running out of the north Bristol fringe and into open countryside. This land used to be at the heart of the market garden landscape helping to feed the city.*

## CAMPAIGN UPDATES

### Save Our Green Spaces

Since launching in June, Save Our Green Spaces has been working to spread the word and build a broad coalition to fight building on greenfield sites across the South West.

We believe that the issues around planning and building on countryside and open spaces are far-reaching and affect everyone, urban and country dwellers alike. Valuable farmland and that of smallholders has been targeted and 'banked' by developers and allowed to sit unused and uncared for, often for years, so that it can subsequently be claimed that it is worthless and adding nothing to the community. Time and again we are seeing plans submitted across the region that encroach on allotments and other food production land.

There has been a rash of recent planning applications in the Bristol area. If you would like to know more then sign up for our newsletter at [www.saveourgreenspaces.org](http://www.saveourgreenspaces.org) to be kept up to date with what is proposed and how you can help us fight it.

See also the July–August issue of this newsletter for more background information on this campaign.

### A Sustainable Food Strategy for Bristol

We have followed up the third consultation session with an afternoon with our Lottery Advisor to discuss the best way to handle the issues raised and to talk further about a Community Interest Company (CIC) management structure that will satisfy the Lottery. Once these have been incorporated into a revised draft, it will be recirculated and letters of support sorted. In the meantime we have also met with the Sustainability teams from the four local authorities to ensure the strategy is supporting and linked in with them.

See the July–August issue of this newsletter for the Executive Summary of the Strategy, or go to [www.transitionbristol.net](http://www.transitionbristol.net) for revised versions of the strategy as they happen.

For more information email: [bristofoodnetwork@googlemail.com](mailto:bristofoodnetwork@googlemail.com)

# Events

## Hotwells & District Allotments Association open day

11am–3pm Sunday 6 September  
Alderman Moore's field

Fruit & veg competitions · Children's Activity Tent · Wonky Tent (with Roy's automata) · Live music · Photo slide show  
Cake sale · Refreshments

[www.hwdaa.co.uk/harvest\\_fun\\_day\\_09.htm](http://www.hwdaa.co.uk/harvest_fun_day_09.htm)

## Organic Fortnight 2009 5–20 September

A nationwide campaign highlighting all the great things about organic. Across the UK, people in shops, schools, cafés, churches, farms and schools will be raising awareness about why organic is the healthy choice, the best for animal welfare and the right thing for the planet.

For event suggestions:

[www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/OrganicFortnight/tabid/244/Default.aspx](http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/OrganicFortnight/tabid/244/Default.aspx)



## Ludlow Food Festival

Friday 11–Sunday 13 September

Britain's original food festival is now in its 15th year. This year's Festival will feature more than 130 small independent food and drink producers from the Marches (England-Wales border country), plus demonstrations, talks, trails and more.

[www.foodfestival.co.uk](http://www.foodfestival.co.uk)

## Abergavenny Food Festival

Saturday 19–Sunday 20 September  
£6 Sat/£5 Sun/£10 weekend

Now in its 11th year. Test out the *Observer's* claim that 'Abergavenny is to food what Cannes is to film, an annual festival for spotting rising stars in Britain's artisan-food firmament'.

[www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com](http://www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com)



## The Organic Food Festival

10am–6pm Saturday 12 September  
10am–5pm Sunday 13 September  
Bristol Harbourside

£5 Entry, free for children and Soil Association members

The Organic Food Festival is Europe's largest showcase of the organic community, with hundreds of organic products, an organic bar, cooking demonstrations with Raymond Blanc, Barny Haughton and other top chefs, children's taste workshops and a lively Street Food Bazaar.

The purpose of the Organic Food Festival is to bring together and expand our organic community. We want to introduce more people to the pioneers growing delicious organic food, items for home and garden, beautiful fibres and sumptuous beauty products in a way that is truly sustainable.

[www.theorganicfoodfestival.co.uk](http://www.theorganicfoodfestival.co.uk)

## The Great Bake with Wallace & Gromit

Children all over the country are invited to take part in The Great Bake competition, giving them the opportunity to take part in a flour workshop with Aardman Animation's Wallace & Gromit, at Bordeaux Quay cookery school.

<http://thegreatbake.bacheldremill.co.uk>

## 'Taste' – South Gloucestershire Local Food & Drink Festival

Saturday 12 September–Sunday 11 October  
Events held all over the county

The 'Taste' month-long food and drink festival consists of 39 separate events being held on farms, bakeries, breweries, a castle, farm shops, a processing factory, and many other venues.

New events for this 5th year of the Festival include:

- Visit to Shipton flour mill
- Tour of Thornbury Castle and vineyard
- Butter making demonstration

For more information:

[www.southgloslocalfood.org](http://www.southgloslocalfood.org)

Download the programme at:

[www.southgloslocalfood.org/Local%20Food%20Festival%2009%20WEB.pdf](http://www.southgloslocalfood.org/Local%20Food%20Festival%2009%20WEB.pdf)

## EASTSIDE ROOTS

### 'That'll Learn You'

6.30–8.30pm  
Wednesday 2 September  
Stapleton Road Train station,  
Easton

A free skill share night by the community, for the community will be held on at our site next to Stapleton Road Train station, Easton.

The topic is 'Gardener's Question Time' with three professional gardeners to answer your problems plus a 'What to plant over winter' special.

Tea, coffee and cake from 6.30pm for donations and workshop from 7pm.

### Benefit night

9pm onwards Friday 25 September  
Trinity Centre

A benefit to pay for the Community Harvest Fete (below). Please join us if you can – full line up on our website:

[www.eastsideroots.org.uk](http://www.eastsideroots.org.uk)

### Community Harvest Fete

12.30–4.30pm Sunday 4 October  
Stapleton Road Train Station,  
Easton

Eastside Roots, the not for profit workers co-operative creating a 'Community Gardening Hub', brings you a free Community Harvest Fete including a wide range of workshops for adults, youth and children, games, storytelling, arts & craft & food stalls, circus performers, healthy cafe, live music and much more. We may also include a food swap event (if you have grown it, prepared it, picked it, cooked it, etc, then swap with others).

We are also doing a Permaculture talk and stall at **Bristol Festival, 18–20 September, Harbourside**  
[www.thebristolfestival.org](http://www.thebristolfestival.org)

## Food stories on the web

### Green walls: the growing success of 'vegetecture'

DIGEST: Architect Ken Yeang makes future plans for 'vertical farms' where residents could grow and harvest food from the walls of their homes.

[www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/science/06/28/green.walls/](http://www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/science/06/28/green.walls/)

### Urban Farming, a Bit Closer to the Sun

DIGEST: Rooftop gardens thrive in Washington DC where tax subsidies favour roofs covered with plants.

[www.nytimes.com/2009/06/17/dining/17roof.html?\\_r=3&pagewanted=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/17/dining/17roof.html?_r=3&pagewanted=1)

### Fruit tree revolution

DIGEST: Thousands of fruit trees and bushes are to be planted in Manchester – with an invitation to 'Help Yourself'.

[www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/s/1109505\\_fruit\\_tree\\_revolution](http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/s/1109505_fruit_tree_revolution)

### Carrot City

DIGEST: An exhibition at Toronto's Design Exchange presents a cross-section of urban agriculture ideas.

[www.canadianarchitect.com/issues/ISArticle.asp?aid=1000331733&PC=](http://www.canadianarchitect.com/issues/ISArticle.asp?aid=1000331733&PC=)

### Stalled building sites in Square Mile to become allotments

DIGEST: The City of London plans to transform development land thwarted by the recession into temporary allotments.

[www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/daily-news/stalled-building-sites-in-square-mile-to-become-allotments/5203998.article](http://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/daily-news/stalled-building-sites-in-square-mile-to-become-allotments/5203998.article)

### Parents and pupils dig the Food4Families message

DIGEST: Parents and children learn to grow fruit and veg together, creating a network of food-growing gardens across Reading.

[www.getreading.co.uk/news/education/s/2052946\\_parents\\_and\\_pupils\\_dig\\_the\\_food4families\\_message](http://www.getreading.co.uk/news/education/s/2052946_parents_and_pupils_dig_the_food4families_message)

# Events

## Westbury on Trym Eco-Fiesta

2–5pm Saturday 20 September

Sustainable Westbury on Trym (SusWot) proudly presents an Eco-Fiesta in the village. Lots to see and do. It's in the High Street, which will be specially pedestrianised for the day.

[www.suswot.org.uk](http://www.suswot.org.uk)



## Love Food Festival

10.30am–4pm Sunday 27 September  
Paintworks, Bath Road

The aim of the festival is to get children (and adults) from Bristol, out into the countryside learning about how and where our food should come from, how to grow and cook their own food and generally try to spark an interest in the topic through various mediums including hands on experience, tasting, art, movement and storytelling.

[www.lovefoodfestival.com](http://www.lovefoodfestival.com)

## Best of Bedminster Show

10.30am–3.30pm Saturday 26 September  
North Street Green, Bedminster  
(opposite Hen and Chicken)

This year's Best in Show categories: Best cake, Best sunflower head, Best jar of chutney, Best jar of jam, Best miniature garden, Best wildlife photo, Best home grown pumpkin, Scariest fruit and vegetable monster and Best display of seasonal produce. Entry forms with a full listing of categories and instructions available from the Southville Centre Reception now.

Refreshments by the WI, face painting, Roy's Wonky Tent, Human fruit machine, bicycle maintenance with Lifecycle's Dr Bike and lots of climate-friendly stalls

Contact Jim: [jim.os@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jim.os@blueyonder.co.uk) or telephone 0117 9664318

[www.climatespace.org/?p=895](http://www.climatespace.org/?p=895)

## Free 'Organic for Schools' Workshop

10am–3pm 19 October  
Twerton Infants School

Poolemead Road, Twerton, Bath BA2 1QR

As part of the Food for Life Partnership, Garden Organic offers a Continuing Professional Development Event for school staff and associated colleagues such as caterers.

The training event will support schools to learn about growing skills activities and how these relate to achieving a Food for Life Partnership Mark award.

The day will enable participants to work with pupils to ensure food is successfully grown through to harvest; to successfully make compost; and to engage the wider school and community in growing activities.

Interactive sessions will cover starting out, sowing techniques, planning your plot, growing in containers, Health & Safety issues and curriculum links.

For further information about this event or the next planned event in your region please contact Angela Bridge, the Garden Organic Administrator:

02476 217 747

[FFLP@Gardenorganic.org.uk](mailto:FFLP@Gardenorganic.org.uk)

[www.gardenorganic.org.uk](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk)

## Free Vegan Food Fair

12–4pm Saturday 31 October  
Broadmead Baptist Church, Broadmead  
(next to Tesco)

Free

Have you ever wondered what vegans eat? You don't have to be Chinese to eat Chinese food, and you don't have to be vegan to eat vegan food!

- Find out more about veganism and celebrate World Vegan Day with us!
- Delicious free food samples
- Cookery demonstrations
- Films
- Free nutrition surgery
- Ethical merchandise

Sponsored by Animal Aid & Vegan Society

For a full programme, visit [www.bristolanimalrights.org.uk](http://www.bristolanimalrights.org.uk) or call 0759 574 5441

# Community supported agriculture

## Community Farm open day

**Story Community Farm, Chew Valley**  
**12pm till late Saturday 5 September**  
£3 for adults, free for children

Local farmer Luke Hasell has teamed up with The Better Food Company organic growers and with local community groups in Chew Magna and Bristol, to plan a pioneering new venture. It is all about local food for local people, grown in a way that cares for the soil and for our wildlife.

At the moment The Community Farm is an eleven acre field, in a gorgeous location overlooking Chew Valley Lake. It is brimming with bountiful organic vegetables, delicious soft fruit, wild flowers, and wildlife.

The plan is to create a Community Farm that gives everyone involved a share in the food from the farm, where landowner, growers, and consumers are in partnership. Local people can become

members of the farm, it will be a centre for recreation, skills and learning, and members will all have a share of the produce.

### Who is behind the Community Farm?

Some of the people involved include:

Luke Hasell of Herons Green Farm  
Phil Haughton of the Better Food Company  
Jim Twine of the Storey  
The Soil Association  
Avon Wildlife Trust  
Chew Valley's Target 80 project  
Transition Bristol

There will be:

- Tours of the farm with Luke the Farmer and Phil and Ben the expert growers
- Field Kitchen demonstrating many ways to use field produce
- Beef BBQ, Vegetarian BBQ and fantastic hog roast
- A bar with local beer and cider (till 11pm)
- Tug-of-war

- Kids corner with story telling and lots of games and a bouncy castle
- Farm vegetables for sale and veg box sign-up
- Information about the project and how you can get involved
- Live music throughout the day

We are just up the road from the Harvest Home festival taking place on the same day in Chew Stoke – so why not make a day of it and come to both events?

### How to find us

The Community Farm is on Denny Lane, about half a mile north of Chew Valley Lake. The postcode is BS40 8SZ. There will be signposts and bunting and plenty of space for cars and bikes. We are on national cycle route number 3.

If you can volunteer to lend a hand on the day please email Luke the Farmer email [luke@thestorygroup.co.uk](mailto:luke@thestorygroup.co.uk)

[www.thestorygroup.co.uk](http://www.thestorygroup.co.uk)

## Newly revised and updated CSA Action Manual – A Share in the Harvest

The Soil Association action manual detailing how to set up a CSA has been revised and updated and will be going live on our website later this week. Newly laid out and split into individual pdfs, the manual provides all the basic information and guidance that you need for setting up a CSA.

[www.soilassociation.org/](http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/tabid/201/Default.aspx)  
[Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/tabid/201/Default.aspx](http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/tabid/201/Default.aspx)



## CSA Regional Networking Event

**10am–3pm 19 September 2009**  
**Embercombe, nr Exeter**  
[www.embercombe.co.uk](http://www.embercombe.co.uk)

This event is being organised by the Soil Association for South West CSA groups, including farmers, growers and core group members. The workshop will include:

- Networking opportunity with other south west CSA groups and practitioners
- Facilitated sessions with Jade Bashford (Soil Association/Stroud CSA) to identify and discuss your next steps
- Mark Simmonds from Coops UK session to help resolve your legal and governance questions
- Tour of beautiful and inspiring Embercombe 'inspiring committed action for a sustainable world' with Jo Clark, head of land based learning

This is a free event with lunch and refreshments provided. Booking is essential. Contact Traci Lewis on [tlewis@soilassociation.org](mailto:tlewis@soilassociation.org)

[www.soilassociation.org/](http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/Newsandevents/tabid/373/Default.aspx)  
[Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/Newsandevents/tabid/373/Default.aspx](http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/Newsandevents/tabid/373/Default.aspx)

## Raising Community Finance

**10am–3pm 7 October**  
**Phoenix Arts Centre, Exeter**  
[www.exeterphoenix.org.uk](http://www.exeterphoenix.org.uk)

Community investment is the practice of communities investing capital in business ventures serving a social or community purpose. This is a unique opportunity to learn from community finance specialists Jim Brown and Paul Sander-Jackson (Wessex Reinvestment Trust) who will be delivering a one-off day event focussed on community investment for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) projects.

This event is invaluable for any land managers, farmers, growers or community groups who want to raise capital for their CSA without being dependant on statutory funding and/or bank loans.

The workshop will be as practical as possible – focusing on the development plans and interests of the participants. Free for CSA groups and practitioners, with lunch and refreshments provided.

Booking is essential. Contact Traci Lewis [tlewis@soilassociation.org](mailto:tlewis@soilassociation.org)

[www.soilassociation.org/](http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/Newsandevents/tabid/373/Default.aspx)  
[Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/Newsandevents/tabid/373/Default.aspx](http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/Newsandevents/tabid/373/Default.aspx)

# News from Hartcliffe

There is a growing demand for allotments not only in Bristol but nationwide. Despite this, some designated allotment sites in Bristol still have unleased plots. One reason for this is that the plots may seem too much of a challenge for an individual to take on and get up to scratch in order to grow things.

Bourchier Gardens Allotments in Hartcliffe is one of these sites – it's in a great location with wonderful views and is also reasonably secluded. It has lots of potential for growing however 16 of the 23 plots are overgrown and unleased. **Walking the Way to Health, Bristol** (WHIB) and **Hartcliffe Health and Environment Action Group** (Hheag) would like to see this land being used more productively and can offer some support in order for it to happen.

Bourchier gardens has 16 unleased plots and there are currently 8 people on the council list that are interested in having a plot on the Bourchier Gardens site. We think that as well as 15 or so individual plots, there is space on this site for a community garden perhaps with fruit trees, herbs and soft fruit bushes.

WHIB and Hheag would like to organise some events and work days on the Bourchier Gardens site with a view to planting a Community Orchard this winter.

## Pick 'n' Bash! Get together & blackberry pick

**2–4pm Friday 11 September**  
**11am–1pm Saturday 12 September**  
**Bourchier Gardens Allotments, Hartcliffe**  
Meet at The Scout Hut, 501 Bishport Avenue, Hartcliffe

- Discover this beautiful allotment site, its nature and wildlife
- Pick blackberries and get some recipes
- Help plan what to grow on this site – fruit trees?
- If you're really game... have a go at bramble bashing!

Refreshments provided. Bring a container/bag for your blackberries.

For further information contact:  
Nic Ferris  
07810 506738/nicola.ferris@bristol.gov.uk  
Sue Walker  
0117 946 5285/sue.walker@hheag.org.uk

## Fit for a Longer Life

**Hartcliffe Health and Environment Action Group** (Hheag), **The Gatehouse Centre, Hartcliffe**

Hheag are currently running an exercise and nutrition course for people over 55 years, called "Fit for a Longer Life".

The courses are designed to give a sociable, relaxed and enjoyable introduction to the benefits of exercise, good nutrition and preparing healthy, low cost foods. The courses will be repeated a number of times in the coming months.

For more information contact  
Sue Walker 0117 946 5285  
[www.hheag.org.uk](http://www.hheag.org.uk)

Hheag will also be running their usual diet related illness courses and those for young parents in the autumn.

We are developing a small library and resource centre at the back of the shop which should be open by September. This area will also be available for nursing mothers if they want somewhere (relatively) private to feed their babies.



## Fareshare South West

FareShare South West is a registered charity that works with the food industry to redistribute quality, fit for purpose, surplus food to a network of organisations working with vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Through food deliveries, community organisations such as hostels, day centres and luncheon clubs are able to make significant savings on their food budgets which can then be redirected into improving services for their clients, such as drug rehab, medical services, housing advice and training.

Fareshare South West work in partnership with over 40 food companies and 70 local community groups, and since opening in late 2007, we have redistributed over 390 tonnes of in-life surplus food to charities in and around Bristol. Organisations based further afield such as Somerset and Gloucester come to pick up food from our warehouse situated in central Bristol.

In addition to free food deliveries, the project also offers volunteering and training opportunities to the local community. Our volunteers include some of our community members' clients, environmentalists, retired, students and professionals.



### An appeal to allotment holders

You too can get involved now by donating surplus fruit and vegetables from your allotment. The one thing we find hard to get is fresh fruit and veg. If you have surplus our community members would be able to benefit from local, fresh fruit and veg.

We would love to hear from you if you are interested in donating or volunteering

Contact 0117 9711005  
[info@faresharesouthwest.org.uk](mailto:info@faresharesouthwest.org.uk)  
[www.faresharesouthwest.org.uk](http://www.faresharesouthwest.org.uk)

# Publications

## Re-framing the great food debate: The case for sustainable food

### New Economics Foundation

Ideas around local food have played a key role in the 'great food debate' over the last two decades. It is now apparent that the notion of 'sustainable food' has important advantages over local food for framing the next phase of the debate. The report defines sustainable food as food associated with high levels of well-being, social justice, stewardship and system resilience.

Government needs to develop an integrated food policy that has relevant economic, social, environmental, climate change and security policies. Specifically, the report says that a new food policy must mount a full-scale attack on the endemic 'cheap food disease' which manifests itself through labour exploitation, environmental degradation and diet-related ill-health.

[www.neweconomics.org/gen/z\\_sys\\_PublicationDetail.aspx?pid=292](http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/z_sys_PublicationDetail.aspx?pid=292)

## Give peas a chance

Europe imports over 70% of the protein concentrates required for animal feed, mostly as soyabeans or soyabean meal. This situation is problematic in several economic and environmental respects.

Peas can provide a realistic substitute for soy in feeds for animals of all types. This would yield lower energy use benefits, and (albeit modest) cuts in greenhouse gas impacts.

[www.grainlegumes.com/aep/special\\_reports/give\\_peas\\_a\\_chance\\_eco\\_environmental\\_analysis\\_in\\_glip/introduction](http://www.grainlegumes.com/aep/special_reports/give_peas_a_chance_eco_environmental_analysis_in_glip/introduction)

## Water labels on food

### Food Ethics Council & Sustain

The paper argues that we need to look not only at how much water is used, but where and what impact it has. For example, research cited in the report shows that while agriculture uses an average 24% of water across the EU, this rises to 80% in some regions. Some types of food are also 'thirstier' than others, with tomatoes, sugar-cane and meat and dairy products being particularly water intensive.

[www.sustainweb.org/news/citizens\\_need\\_info\\_on\\_watery\\_food/](http://www.sustainweb.org/news/citizens_need_info_on_watery_food/)

## Securing food supplies up to 2050: the challenges for the UK

### House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee report

- The UK must make the most of its temperate climate and the natural advantages this gives it for producing food.
- How food is produced is as important as how much. We will need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce reliance on fossil fuel inputs and conserve soil and water.
- The report does not advocate UK self-sufficiency and emphasises the importance of strong trading relationships with a variety of countries.
- The report highlights the development of 'food colonialism' or 'land grabbing' (large-scale acquisition of land overseas by wealthy investors in order to grow food for people in the investor country). The report warns about the pressure this could place on the global food system.

[www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/environment\\_food\\_and\\_rural\\_affairs/efra\\_food\\_policy.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/environment_food_and_rural_affairs/efra_food_policy.cfm)

## Can Totnes and district feed itself?

### Transition Town Totnes

Utilising GIS mapping and the datasets that are currently accessible, the report explores the current land classes and how farmland is currently used, and then, using Simon Fairlie's 'Livestock Permaculture' model, assesses whether or not Totnes and District could actually feed itself. The answer (assuming roughly stable climate conditions) is that yes, it could, but only if:

- It lived in isolation from its large neighbours, Plymouth and Torbay. When these settlements are factored in, it becomes far more difficult;
- Far far more people lived on, and worked, the land; and
- We ate a very different diet from the one we consume today.

[transitionculture.org/2009/07/10/announcing-the-release-of-can-totnes-and-district-feed-itself/](http://transitionculture.org/2009/07/10/announcing-the-release-of-can-totnes-and-district-feed-itself/)



## Food security and sustainability: The perfect fit

### Sustainable Development Commission

Sense can only be made of the food security issue if policy at the same time delivers sustainability. The report makes 7 key recommendations as to how this synergy might be achieved.

[www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/SDCFoodSecurityPositionPaper.pdf](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/SDCFoodSecurityPositionPaper.pdf)

# Odds & ends

## Social Business Toolbox Launched

The Enterprise Support team of Making Local Food Work have made available a toolkit for social enterprises. Stuffed with crib sheets on topics as diverse as how to develop a business plan to the current trends and issues in the local food sector, these are a handy resource for budding and seasoned social entrepreneurs alike.

Download them from [www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/about/toolbox/Toolbox.cfm](http://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/about/toolbox/Toolbox.cfm)



## Windmill Hill City Farm appeal

Bristol's oldest City Farm is facing a budget shortfall, and is at risk of closure unless it can raise £50,000 before Christmas.

The Save our Farm Appeal was launched on 22 August with 'The Big Fundraiser' event, including a fun day at the farm, and a fun night at Fiddlers. For news of upcoming events and for details of how you can help, go to:

[www.windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk](http://www.windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk)

or make a donation at:

[www.windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk/support-us/donations.html](http://www.windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk/support-us/donations.html)



## The Abundance Handbook

### Abundance Handbook: a guide to urban fruit harvesting

Learning from their experience from harvesting in Sheffield, Abundance, a local community project, have written a beautiful guide to urban fruit and nut harvesting. The guide extensively explains what steps to take to start harvesting and how to set up an urban harvesting project – and it's free! To download, go to: [www.growsheffield.com/pages/groshefhandb.html](http://www.growsheffield.com/pages/groshefhandb.html)

### Quick reference growing cards

Garden Organic have launched a set of handy, quick-reference Growing Instruction Cards – all the information you need to start growing your own veg, fruit, herbs, edible flowers and green manures.

These can be downloaded free at:

[www.gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/growing\\_cards.php?dm\\_i=4UO,1HH,JC186,4VDL,1](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/growing_cards.php?dm_i=4UO,1HH,JC186,4VDL,1)

## PETITIONS

### Herbicide petition

Last July, the herbicide aminopyralid was withdrawn after a national outcry about the damage caused by manure contaminated with it. This damage was experienced particularly by allotment holders, who unwittingly bought manure produced from animals which had been fed aminopyralid-treated hay/silage. The herbicide didn't affect the grass, and didn't affect the animals that ate the fodder, but it passed through the animals to pass on its herbicide properties to allotment crops.

Dow Agrochemicals have quietly applied for aminopyralid to be reinstated and this seems likely to be granted by Government unless protests from influential groups and individuals can prevent it.

Sign the petition on the No 10 website <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/aminopyralidban/>

For more information about the problem, full details of the story which started in early 2008 can be found at [www.glallotments.btik.com/p\\_Contaminated\\_Manure.ikml](http://www.glallotments.btik.com/p_Contaminated_Manure.ikml)

### Save the bees!

The Soil Association are calling on the Government to protect our honeybees and ban neonicotinoid pesticides. These pesticides have been shown to kill honeybees and are thought to be a contributory factor in the recent dramatic increase in honeybee deaths.

Join the other 12,000+ signatories to the petition at:

[www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Savethehoneybee/tabid/434/Default.aspx](http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Savethehoneybee/tabid/434/Default.aspx)

### Save Southville from supermarket invasion

North Street in Southville/Bedminster is one of the last thriving independent high streets in Bristol. Its future is threatened by the proposed sell-off of Bristol City's Ashton Gate football ground for a major supermarket development.

Campaign website: [www.berate.co.uk](http://www.berate.co.uk)

Petition:

<http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/petition.php?id=262>

# News from Knowle

## Knowle West's Harvest Celebration day

12–3pm Saturday 31 October  
Knowle West Media Centre

People from near and far flocked to join in with the flavourful fun at Knowle West's 3rd Food Fest on Sunday 5 July. There were workshops and talks on a range of food topics, including how to keep chickens, plant potatoes and use plants to heal yourself. Only the briefest of rain showers appeared to cool us all down. The home-made Elderflower fizzy drink, made with Knowle West's own elderflowers was a



hit, too, with one enthusiastic teenager saying "It's really nice, you can taste all the flavours in it. It's like your own brand of lemonade but better – it's better than cola!"

After such a successful event, we don't think we can wait a whole year for another one! So we hope you'll be able to come along in October to celebrate the gathering of the harvest. We hope to have cider making, all sorts of fun with apples and after digging up our spuds from the Summer food fest, we will be baking them in our clay oven. If you want an event where the community is at the heart of it all, come and join us...

For more information contact Misty Tunks, Carbon Makeover project coordinator phone: 0117 9030444 ext 211  
[www.kwmc.org.uk/carbonmakeover](http://www.kwmc.org.uk/carbonmakeover)

# Regular things



## Bristol local food directory

[www.bristollocalfood.co.uk](http://www.bristollocalfood.co.uk)

Publicise your community project or promote your favourite stalls, shops, pubs & cafés. Help us to keep the directory up-to-date with reviews by you – people who care about local food. Fill in the form on the website, or email suggestions to: [info@bristolfoe.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolfoe.org.uk)



## Bristol's Local Food Update

If you didn't receive this PDF by email, you can send a subscription request for future issues to be sent to you, to: [bristollocalfood@googlemail.com](mailto:bristollocalfood@googlemail.com)

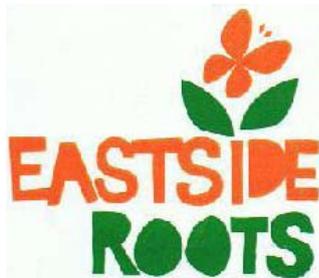
This is also the address for sending anything you would like included in the next newsletter – deadline 13 October.

## GROFUN Action Weekends

Ashley Vale Allotments, St Werburghs  
Every week, from noon Saturdays & Sundays

Ashley Vale Allotments are just behind The Farm pub, Hopetoun Road, St Werburghs. Drag on your wellies and come and give an hour or two. Refreshments provided

Phone Nadia 0797 3847894 for more info.



## Eastside Roots regular volunteer days

Stapleton Road Train Station  
10.30am–4.30pm Wednesdays & Fridays

Trinity Community Arts Centre garden  
12 noon–5pm every Thursday

Improve your local community, meet new friends, learn new skills and keep fit.

For more information, phone Nick Ward on 07810 806 354 or email [nick@eastsideroots.org.uk](mailto:nick@eastsideroots.org.uk)

[www.eastsideroots.org.uk](http://www.eastsideroots.org.uk)



## Grub Club Organic Veg Club

Every Tuesday 4.30–6.30pm  
Midnimo Centre, 163 Ashley Road,  
St Pauls

Enjoy wholesale veg prices on organic veg, by joining the The Grub Club veg co-op – which now has its own website:

<http://bristolgrubclub.blogspot.com/>

## Royate Hill Community Orchard

Regular monthly workdays  
1st & 3rd Saturdays of the month  
11am–4pm (drop by anytime, but cleaning up starts around 3pm)

As well as the fruit trees, we also plant vegetables, and whoever shows up for workdays when there is a harvest, gets to take food home. Drinks available, bring snacks to share. Tools and gardening gloves provided. There is also a compost toilet at the orchard. Everybody welcome, regardless of experience.

For more information:  
[www.kebelecoop.org/collectives\\_permaculture.html](http://www.kebelecoop.org/collectives_permaculture.html)

Map at:  
[www.kebelecoop.org/images/flyer\\_permaculture\\_may08.pdf](http://www.kebelecoop.org/images/flyer_permaculture_may08.pdf)

*This issue of Bristol's local food update was compiled by Jane Stevenson and Kristin Sponsler · Design by Jane Stevenson: [janestevenson@madasafish.com](mailto:janestevenson@madasafish.com). Thanks to Martin Haswell for the fruit & veg photos: [www.mhdi.co.uk](http://www.mhdi.co.uk)*